

Message Text

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ACTION STR-07

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DEPT PASS STR ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, JA
SUBJECT: HANDLING OF TFC CASES AND STRAUSS-USHIBA MEETING

REF: (A) STATE 124841, (B) TOKYO 8387, (C) TOKYO 7103

1. SUMMARY: MITI WORRIED ABOUT STRAUSS DISCUSSING TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE WITH USHIBA. COMPLEX INTER-AGENCY JURISDICTIONS ARE INVOLVED. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS WE KEEP OUT OF TANGLED WEB BUT URGE CONTINUED ATTENTION AND PROGRESS TO COMBINED GOJ EFFORTS TO FACILITATE IMPORTS OF U.S. PRODUCTS INTO JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

2. MITI IS DISTURBED AT PROSPECT OF STRAUSS RAISING "UPGRADING OF TFC" WITH USHIBA AT FORTHCOMING LOS ANGELES MEETING. THEY SUGGEST HANAOKA OF MITI WHO WILL BE IN WASHINGTON MAY 25-30 WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS TFC WITH WEIL AND OTHERS.

3. HANAOKA, IN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY DIRECT FASHION, URGED E/CMIN MAY 17 NOT TO PUSH ANY FURTHER TO RESOLVE GOJ INTERNAL BUREAUCRATIC HANDLING OF TFC CASES. HE NOTED CABINET LEVEL ATTENTION HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT SUBJECT
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(REF C) AND THAT THE GENERAL GOJ CONCERN WITH SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF TFC CASES IS NOW WELL UNDERSTOOD.

4. AS WE HAVE REPORTED (REFS B AND C) WE ARE WORKING OUT PROCEDURES TAILORED TO EACH CASE TO ASSURE MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS IN PROCEEDING THROUGH THE MAZE OF THE JAPANESE CAREER BUREAUCRACY, ESPECIALLY IN THOSE OUTSIDE MITI'S

NORMAL JURISDICTION. EACH CASE WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED SO AS TO GET THE CORRECT CONSTELLATION OF FORCES MOBILIZED FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES. WE THINK THIS CAN BE MANAGED IF WE PROCEED IN THE JAPANESE FASHION. WE SHOULD RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO SEEK AMERICAN ORIENTED SOLUTIONS SUCH AS THE NAMING OF A CZAR. USHIBA'S INTERNAL POSITION (AND STAFFING) IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH FOR HIM TO ASSUME THAT ROLE NOR DOES FOREIGN MINISTRY HAVE THE INTERNAL CLOUT IN EVERY CASE TO MOVE THE BUREAUCRACY IN THE DOMESTICALLY ORIENTED ECONOMIC MINISTRIES. THEY CAN BE HELPFUL AT THE MARGINS AND WE WILL DRAW THEM IN WHENEVER THEIR INPUT WILL BE PRODUCTIVE.

5. WE THINK MITI'S SENSITIVITY ARISES FROM FEELING THAT HANAOKA HAS GOTTEN THE BLAME FOR LACK OF SUCCESS IN SOME RECENT COMPLAINT CASES AND THAT HIGH LEVEL U.S. ATTENTION (U.S. REMARKS TO PRESS AFTER FUKUDA VISIT, SECRETARY KREPS RAISING SUBJECT AT FUKUDA BREAKFAST, AMBASSADOR STRAUSS REMARKS TO USHIBA) HAS IN SOME WAY PLACED BLAME WITH THEM.

6. WE THINK MITI IS NOW SUFFICIENTLY CHASTENED, THAT HIGH LEVEL JAPANESE ATTENTION IS NOW FOCUSED ON SUBJECT AND THAT WE WILL BEGIN TO SEE SOME SUCCESSES IN CASES THAT DO NOT RAISE TOO MANY DIFFICULT INTERNAL ISSUES.

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7. THEREFORE WE SUGGEST THAT STRAUSS MERELY NOTE THE CABINET DISCUSSION WITH GRATIFICATION, THANKING JAPAN FOR INITIATIVES LIKE IKEDA MISSION AND JETRO SEMINARS, AND EXPRESSING HOPE FOR CONTINUED PROGRESS IN TFC. WE THINK ANY EFFORT TO GET DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN GOJ JURISDICTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IS LIKELY TO BACKFIRE, AND THAT USHIBA WILL UNDERSTAND A LOW-KEY STATEMENT.

8. WE HOPE WASHINGTON AGENCIES WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HANAOKA'S PRESENCE THERE FOR THOROUGH AIRING OF THE SUBJECT, BEARING IN MIND THAT HE POSSESSES EARNEST GOOD WILL TOWARD WHOLE CONCEPT OF TRADE FACILITATION AND A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLES AND VIEWS OF OTHER GOJ AGENCIES BESIDES MITI, EVEN THOUGH HE CANNOT SPEAK FOR THEM. MANSFIELD

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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